

assigned to me, so that from that time till my return from Europe in 1789, and I may say till I returned to reside at home in 1809, I had little opportunity of knowing the progress of public sentiment here on this subject. I had always hoped that the younger generation receiving their early impressions after the flame of liberty had been kindled in every breast, and become as it were the vital spirit of every American, that the generous temperament of youth, analogous to the motion of their blood, and above the suggestions of avarice would have sympathized with oppression wherever found and proved their love for liberty beyond their own share of it. But my intercourse with them since my return has not been sufficient to ascertain that they had made toward this point the progress I had hoped. Your solitary but welcome voice is the first which has brought this to my ear; and I have considered the general silence which prevails on this subject as indicating an apathy unfavorable to every hope. Yet the hour of emancipation is advancing in the march of time. It will come; and whether brought on by the generous energy of our own minds, or by the bloody process of St. Domingo, excited and conducted by the power of our present enemy, if one stationed permanently within our country and offering asylums and arms to the oppressed, *is* a leaf of history not yet turned over. As to the method by which this difficult work is to be effected if permitted to be done by ourselves, I have seen no proposition so expedient on the whole as that of emancipation of those born after a given day, and of their education and expatriation after a given age. This would give time for a gradual extinction of that species of labor and substitution of another, and lessen the severity of the shock which an operation so fundamental cannot fail to produce. For men probably of any color, but of this color we know, brought from their infancy without necessity forethought or forecast are by their habits rendered as incapable as children of taking care of themselves, and are extinguished promptly wherever industry is necessary for raising young. In the meantime they are pests in society by their idleness and the depredations to which this leads them. Their amalgama-